



# **Commandant of the Marine Corps Commanders' Program Brief to Command Spouses**

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# Psychological Health Concerns

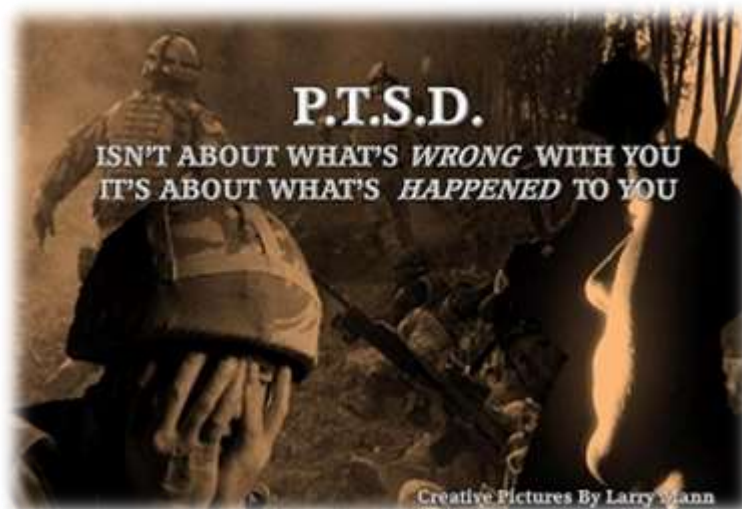
- There are multiple cause behind physical, behavioral, cognitive, and functional changes
- Marines may be irritable, anxious, depressed, fatigued, have insomnia and complain of cognitive problems (memory, concentration, etc.)
- It is important that symptoms are evaluated by medical to determine diagnosis and treatment. Overlap occurs.



# PTS and PTSD

## Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- PTS/PTSD: Reaction after trauma. Marines may experience flashbacks, nightmares, hyper-vigilance, avoidance and numbing.
- 12-20% of OIF/OEF/OND vets exhibit psychological health symptoms. Less than 50% seek help.
- PTSD is often not fully addressed due to stigma, access to care, and inadequate treatment.





# MDD & SUD

- Major Depressive Disorder(MDD): Low mood, energy, loss of interest, & motivation, hopelessness, guilt, sleep or appetite changes, concentration problems, suicidal thoughts. MDD is a medical illness, not a grief reaction
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD): Using alcohol to sleep can escalate and cause work or relationship problems, binge drinking, DUI



# Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Often Marines with mTBI function well in a controlled environment but perform poorly in a less prescriptive settings where behavioral limits are not strictly enforced or with situations requiring assimilation and processing of information.

## mTBI Statistics

- Mild TBI (mTBI) is a signature injury of OEF/OIF
  - Up to 20% of those deployed in theatre have experienced blast exposure
  - Enhanced recognition, implementation of pre-deployment testing, mandatory theater evaluation after the event, enforcement of post deployment screening
- 80% of TBIs in Marines are not the result of combat but of accidents or injuries. Most are mild and resolve within 3-6 months.
- Recovery may require adaptations to assist with lingering problems

## Signs and Symptoms

- Physical complaints – headache, photophobia, fatigue, balance, focus issues
- Psychological/emotional symptoms
- Depression
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Memory & executive function deficits; difficulty organizing tasks
- Irritability, impulsivity
- Behavioral issues
- Poor insight





# Wounded Warrior Regiment Mission

Provides leadership and facilitates the integration of non-medical and medical care to combat and non-combat wounded, ill, and injured (WII) Marines, sailors attached to Marine units, and their family members in order to maximize their recovery as they return to duty or transition to civilian life.

- Serves the total force – active duty, reserve, retired, and veteran Marines.
- The only official Marine Corps unit charged with providing non-medical care to WII Marines.



## Wound

- IED Blast
- Gunshot
- Traumatic Brain Injury

## Illness

- Cancer
- Chronic Illness
- Mental Health

## Injury

- Training Accident
- Vehicle Accident
- Post Traumatic Stress



# Marines Recovering at their Parent Units

*CMC expressed intent that WII Marines should remain assigned to their parent units, so long as their medical conditions allow and their units can support them.*

WWR provides services to help Commander's ensure WII Marines' productive recoveries via:

- **Wounded Warrior Battalions East and West Contact Center**
- **Recovery Care Coordinators**
- **WWR Medical Cell**
- **District Injured Support Coordinators**
- **Administrative Support**
- **Integrated Disability Evaluation System Advocacy**





# Global Reach

**Wounded Warrior Regiment support is not a factor of luck and location.**







# Family and Caregiver Support

## Comments from a Caregiver:

*"The major challenges that face me as a caregiver have been taking time to take care of myself. Not knowing how to help without making things more difficult. Not being able to plan out because of the unknown. Explaining to my kids what was going on. Worrying about money all the time or if we would be okay. Putting my life on hold with school work, my self-interest, just so I can be focused and ready for what I had to do to care for my husband and take care of kids at the same time as well as keep up with our home. Also explaining to other family members that want to help or be there what's going on or how to handle things. I've always felt the need to be alert and ready because that was what you have to do to keep your family together and your home standing. If I became selfish and ignored my duties as a caregiver, then we would fall. At the same time, I know when we transition out I will need to return to the workforce and go to school. That becomes a challenge because all I've know the last few years is to be right there whenever my husband needed me. I hope that I can translate that into my work one day."*

## What can you do to help?

- Reach out even when not asked: Families / caregivers appreciate knowing that they are not alone and that their "military family" is available and ready to support.
- Be in the know: Familiarize yourself with the various resources to support families / caregivers and regularly inform families / caregivers of the support opportunities.

**The Wounded Warrior Regiment Can Help You!**



# Communication / Outreach

## Communication is Key to Support

### WWR Call Center / Contact Centers

- Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center
  - Monthly call volume: 9,500 outreach / 1,200 incoming
  - Target population: Veteran Marines (TDRL, Purple Heart, PCR)
  - Population total: 28,277
- Wounded Warrior Battalion Contact Centers
  - Monthly call volume (combined): 3,500 outreach / 400 incoming
  - Target population: Recovering Marines with their parent commands
  - Population total: 3,667

### Social Media

- Facebook
  - Includes a Support Form
  - **Over 60,000 Followers!**
- Twitter
- YouTube

### WWR Mobile Application

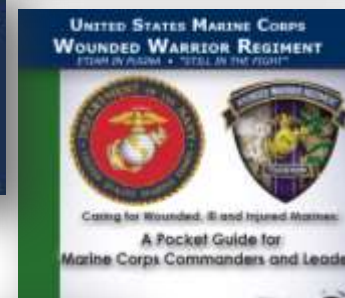
- Recent launch of version 2.0
- Provides prompt and easy access to WWR resources
- **Nearly 6,000 downloads!**

### WWR Quarterly Report

- One-page report suitable for internal and external audiences
- Downloadable from the WWR website



*Sergeant Merlin German*





# Connect to the WWR Today!

**Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center  
1.877.487.6299**

[www.woundedwarriorregiment.org](http://www.woundedwarriorregiment.org)

[Facebook.com/wwr.usmc](https://www.facebook.com/wwr.usmc)

**Download the mobile app on  
iTunes (iPhone or iPad) or Google  
Play (Android) by searching  
"Wounded Warrior"**



**Our Marines and their Families are Still in the Fight!  
Thank you for your continued support.**